

A Plan for Coordination of Kansas Postsecondary Education

KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS

Goals and Tasks for 2000-2004

The Legislative Mandate

In 1999, when the Kansas Legislature and Governor Bill Graves reconstituted the State Board of Regents (Senate Bill 345), they called upon the Board to develop a “comprehensive plan for the coordination of higher education.” This goal-setting exercise is one element of developing a comprehensive plan.

In the same legislation, the Regents also were required (among other responsibilities) to (1) determine institutional roles and review institutional missions and goals; (2) develop articulation procedures so that maximum freedom of transfer among and between postsecondary educational institutions is ensured; (3) develop and implement a comprehensive plan for distance learning technologies; (4) approve core indicators of quality performance; and (5) collect and analyze data and maintain a uniform postsecondary education data base. The goals and tasks outlined in this document will establish an overarching framework in which these responsibilities will be undertaken during the next four years. It will set not only a multi-year vision and core set of values for the system, but a concrete policy agenda that will guide funding and programmatic recommendations in the coming four years.

The Planning Environment

This plan is undertaken at a time of unprecedented economic growth in the nation. The U.S. is now entering the longest period of economic expansion in the history of the nation. Kansas’ per capita income in 1998 stood at \$25,049 or 95% of the national average. According to the *Governor’s Economic and Demographic Report 1999-2000*, the Kansas employment rate is at an all-time high. In fact, further economic growth is expected to be constrained from the lack of qualified workers and in-migrants.

Kansas’ employment trends mirror those of the nation: stagnant growth in goods-producing industries, increases in services, and declines in farm employment. On closer examination, however, there are significant differences in the Kansas economy compared to other plains states. While employment growth rates have exceeded other states in the region in recent years, these increases have occurred in relatively low paying trade and retail services. In the better paying sector of finance, insurance and real estate, Kansas has lagged behind its neighbors.

Regionally, Kansas is by no means homogenous. Significant income differences can be found between rural and urban counties. Per capita income in 1998 ranged from a high of \$38,300 in Johnson County to a low of \$15,800 in southeast Chautauqua County.

The economic expansion of the past decade has illustrated the close connection between education levels of the population and economic growth. It has also demonstrated the critical role that our research universities have played in the nation's global competitiveness. The impact of postsecondary education on the personal and financial well being of individuals is significant and growing. In simple terms, higher levels of education lead to higher levels of income – sometimes postsecondary education leads to dramatically higher levels of income than high school graduates can attain.

In *The Glion Declaration* (1998), Frank Rhodes, former president of Cornell University wrote:

The new millennium into which we move, and which our children will inherit, confronts us with a bewildering mixture of promise and threat...And, if the balance between promise and threat is unclear, what is clear is that the essential key – though not the only key – to human well-being in this daunting new world is knowledge.

Anthony P. Carnevale and Stephen J. Rose in their book entitled *The New Office Economy*, offer dramatic evidence of the power of the “knowledge economy” in the U.S. today. They discovered that college graduates overwhelmingly are found in high-skilled services and administrative functions. They work in hospitals, classrooms, and offices where the pay is higher and the work often more rewarding than in factory, “counter” and farm settings. This “office economy” is the largest and fastest growing sector in the nation.

While the size of the office economy overwhelms other sectors, significant shortages and skill upgrading is needed in such areas as computer technology (for example, network management, multi-media development) and sophisticated manufacturing technologies. Adult workers in the areas of criminal justice, childcare, and governmental service also are seeking further education. Some of these skills are especially important to the success of rural areas of Kansas.

One of the keys to the economic success of the past decade has been significant improvement in productivity, primarily as the result of the application of information technology and new management strategies in the economy. State government has also been slow to recognize the influence of its own conduct on productivity, as institutions face significant regulatory and financial management barriers.

The competitive environment in postsecondary education is another important consideration as we develop our plans for the coming four years. Geographic and political boundaries are falling as institutions in other states and internationally begin to offer their courses and services to Kansas residents. Private sector investments in for-profit education providers are growing significantly, as are the e-commerce activities of traditional institutions. This new spirit of entrepreneurship is expanding choice and educational opportunity to many students, but not all. Commercial ventures and the “profit making” activities of the public and independent sectors tend to seek out students and clients who can pay full costs. It remains for the state to support those activities and needs which may be neglected by the “free market.”

An important part of this assessment of public needs is the clear articulation of statewide goals and implementation strategies to meet those goals. Thus, this planning and goal-setting exercise is essential for the coming four years.

Board of Regents Tagline

Advancing Knowledge – Expecting Excellence

Board of Regents Vision Statement

Kansans reaching their greatest potential through excellence in higher education

Board of Regents Mission Statement

To advance quality of life, promote economic vitality, create and preserve knowledge, foster respect for diversity and enrich the culture of Kansas by delivering superior educational opportunities for all citizens, so they may reach their greatest potential.

Board of Regents Responsibilities

- *Serve as the advocate for higher education in Kansas*
- *Ensure accountability to the state and its citizens*
- *Govern the six Regents Universities and provide coordination for Washburn University*
- *Coordinate the community colleges, technical schools and colleges in the Kansas System of higher education*
- *Interface with independent postsecondary education institutions*
- *Stimulate work force development in Kansas*

System Coordination Goals

This plan seeks to establish collective goals for coordination of the system as a whole. These goals should reflect the aspirations of the people of Kansas for a high quality, accessible, and responsive education system. Individual institutions – public, independent, and for-profit – will have their own particular goals and missions, but as a system we will pursue the following overarching goals for coordination.

Goal #1: Review and approve the mission and role of the four sectors of public postsecondary education (technical institutions, community colleges, state universities, and Washburn University). Determine improvements to the system that may be achieved from potential restructuring of governance and administrative entities.

The Board must balance the competing demands of institutions and seek cooperative rather than competitive solutions to new program development. It must sort out the overlap in mission between sectors and determine the appropriate role of institutions in such areas as future enrollment and programmatic growth.

At the same time, the Board must seek opportunities to encourage mergers and affiliations among institutions with similar missions in close geographic proximity. It must provide

incentives for the functional integration of services across institutions and the development of consortial academic programs.

Tasks

- 1-A. Review and establish the mission and roles of each of the four sectors of public postsecondary education.
- 1-B. Determine and recommend improvements to the postsecondary education system that could be achieved from restructuring of governance and administrative entities.
- 1-C. Identify opportunities to apply technology to gain quality and cost advantages in both academic and administrative activities across institutions and sectors.
- 1-D. Develop a data-driven system of analysis and decision making for statewide coordination.

Goal #2: Create an integrated, articulated system of public education that promotes success from one level to the next while maintaining high standards.

Student success depends upon a number of factors: adequate preparation, informed counseling and advising, coherent and well-articulated curricula, and the ability to progress from level to level and institution to institution as individual goals expand and change throughout one's life. Students, parents, employers and the general public have a high level of expectation that the various segments of education will work closely together to ease transitions and support the career goals and aspirations of individuals.

Tasks

- 2-A. Identify and implement strategies that will improve articulation of courses and programs among public postsecondary education institutions.
- 2-B. Jointly develop and approve, with the Kansas State Board of Education, a plan to improve articulation of courses, programs and services between P-12 and public postsecondary education institutions in Kansas.

Goal #3: The Kansas postsecondary education system should seek to minimize barriers to access and facilitate institutional missions to encompass lifelong learning.

Kansas' educational institutions hold the keys to personal success and societal well being. The knowledge economy of the 21st century demands a more substantial commitment from our institutions to serve all of our citizens, regardless of such factors as educational goals, location, age, gender or race. Economic barriers can come in the form of both direct costs of attending college and indirect costs, such as foregone income, while attending college. Geographic barriers relate not only to the physical distance to a campus, but to such factors as commute time and convenience. Personal barriers come in many forms including life circumstances, physical disabilities, and lack of adequate academic preparation. In extending access, the Board

seeks proposals that apply 21st century information technology solutions to complement traditional “brick and mortar” options.

Tasks

- 3-A. Analyze the high school graduation rates, college participation rates and other measures of educational and skill attainment by county of residence in order to determine enrollment targets for under-served areas and groups.
- 3-B. Recommend strategies, including technology solutions, to enable multiple institutions, public or independent, to provide access to under-served areas.
- 3-C. Examine the effectiveness of the current state student aid program as it relates to both public and independent sectors of postsecondary education and recommend improvements.
- 3-D. Examine the effectiveness of current efforts in public postsecondary education to promote matriculation by students with diverse backgrounds.

Goal #4: Kansas postsecondary education institutions should become a more powerful force for the development of economic opportunity, workforce training, and improved quality of life in the state.

Throughout the nation, technical institutions, community colleges, liberal arts colleges, and universities are reexamining their program offerings and curricula to prepare students for a changing workplace and a changing world. Connections to employers are being strengthened through advisory structures, work-study programs, cooperative learning, and collaborative research endeavors. Learning processes are beginning to mirror work processes – more use of technology, more collaborative and applied learning options. In the area of community service, both students and faculty are being asked to increase their commitments. Colleges and universities are also undertaking initiatives to contribute to the solution of important health, agriculture, business, environmental, and social problems.

Tasks

- 4-A. Recommend methods by which postsecondary institutions would increase support for and promote arts and humanities programs and activities in Kansas. Support an expanded role for postsecondary education in community involvement.
- 4-B. Recommend strategies that will result in enhanced workforce and economic development in Kansas.
- 4-C. Improve the competitiveness of Kansas’ universities to compete for sponsored research funds.

Goal #5: In order to accomplish the above, Kansas needs an adequate, equitable, and flexible financing system that supports both institutions and students in need.

With the reorganization of the Kansas Board of Regents to encompass a coordinating function for all postsecondary institutions, including budget recommendations, there is an urgent need to reexamine the different financing systems that currently fund technical schools and colleges, community colleges, and universities. This review must encompass tuition and pricing, operational expenses, capital needs, and mechanisms for funding statewide priorities and initiatives. It must focus on achieving the goals outlined in this plan as well as the development of fair and equitable policies that support diverse institutional missions. It must assure continued and expanded access by students through both institutional and student-based financing.

Tasks

- 5-A. Examine and recommend strategies for increasing fiscal flexibility and instrumentality on the part of the Board of Regents and institutions.
- 5-B. Examine means and methodologies for the Kansas Board of Regents to implement statewide priorities and initiatives through the budget and recommend improvements.
- 5-C. Examine the adequacy of base funding for all sectors of postsecondary education and recommend improvements.
- 5-D. Study current tuition policies for all public postsecondary education institutions. Recommend improvements, including issues related to distance learning delivery, tuition relationships among institutions, and resident and non-resident tuition across all sectors.
- 5-E. Examine the current capital funding process for all sectors of public postsecondary education and recommend improvements.

Approved KBOR 10/19/00
H/planning/plan for coordination